

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: The Olive School, Birmingham

215 Reddings Lane, Birmingham, West Midlands B11 3EY

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

The Olive School, Birmingham has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Rifat Batool. This school is part of Star Academies, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sir Mufti Hamid Patel CBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kamruddin Kothia OBE DL. There is also a regional director, Shahina Ahmad OBE, who is responsible for this school and six others.

What is it like to attend this school?

The STAR values of service, teamwork, ambition and respect underpin and thread through everything you hear, see and feel at this happy school. There is an impressive understanding of the school's vision and values among pupils, staff, parents and governors alike. This shared understanding leads to a strong sense of community, belonging and inclusion. This is a school where there is always a warm welcome to all.

The school sets extremely high expectations, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is a tangible passion for every pupil to succeed and a relentless drive to help them do so. Pupils share this ambition, which shows in their exemplary attitudes and efforts. They are diligent learners who strive to improve and excel. They produce work of high quality across the curriculum and achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are polite, generous and thoughtful towards everyone. Classrooms, corridors and the playground are harmonious, happy places where pupils feel safe and love to learn. Pupils are proud of their school. They are active partners in making it such an industrious, successful learning environment.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

There is nothing at this school that is left to chance. The curriculum has been intelligently designed and refined so that teachers know how and when to teach it. Content in each subject is sequenced so that pupils' knowledge builds over time. Pupils understand and benefit from this. For instance, when discussing art and design, pupils are able to explain exactly how their knowledge and skills improve year on year. A focus on key vocabulary gives them the language to talk confidently about their learning. They describe the habitats of amphibians in science and the use of stanzas in poetry and demonstrate their language skills learned in French and Arabic lessons.

All staff share a passion for inclusion. They are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND and provide support. This ensures that pupils with SEND are fully included in school activities. The school provides bespoke and carefully crafted help, which is never obtrusive.

Teachers are highly skilled at delivering the curriculum because the school provides effective training and regular support. There is an impressive consistency across the school in how staff present information, share instructions and structure activities. For example, the same language and approach is used effectively in lessons and helps secure pupils' confidence and independence. Staff regularly check that pupils have a secure understanding before moving on. These checks help to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Learning to read begins with daily phonics lessons from the start of Reception. The school has ensured that all staff are experts at teaching phonics. They make regular checks on what pupils know so that they can decide on the next steps. Lessons are engaging, and pupils quickly become skilled readers. Teachers read regularly to pupils, and they absolutely love this, particularly when a story is left on a cliffhanger. Pupils become discerning, enthusiastic readers, which is reflected in how well they achieve in national tests.

Staff model high expectations of behaviour and actively teach pupils how to reach them. This starts on the first day of Reception, and children quickly settle into routines. The conduct of pupils across the school is simply exemplary. It is calm yet busy and purposeful. Bullying is very rare but, if it happens, pupils have absolute faith that adults will sort it out.

Opportunities for pupils' personal development are extensive. The school is careful to select valuable enrichment activities, clubs and experiences that match the school's priorities of staying safe, achieving excellence and serving the community. These opportunities range from becoming councillors, debaters or junior chefs. Pupils contribute to an extensive drive to help those who are less fortunate. In the last academic year, they helped raise an incredible £49,000 for charities, including by climbing Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon).

This is a school that does not rest on its laurels. It engages regularly with parents. They are highly appreciative of the work it does. The school, trust and leaders at all levels share a collaborative culture of continual reflection and improvement. The school provides staff with effective, regular training and actively works to make their workload manageable. Staff feel well supported and are extremely proud to say they work at The Olive School, Birmingham.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142888
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10344076
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	630
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kamruddin Kothia OBE DL
CEO of the trust	Sir Mufti Hamid Patel CBE
Principal	Rifat Batool
Website	www.olivebirmingham.com
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school was opened by Star Academies Trust in September 2016. Star Academies is a multi-academy trust which runs 36 schools nationally.
- This school has an Islamic ethos and welcomes pupils of all faiths and none. The school is subject to inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. It was inspected in March 2020 and judged to be outstanding in all areas.
- Since the last inspection, the school has moved into a new building.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school offers before-school childcare.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic

began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the principal and other leaders, including the regional director and special educational needs coordinator.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- An inspector listened to some pupils reading to a member of school staff.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and the chair and vice-chair of the local board of governors.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- The lead inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. He also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including school improvement plans, the school's website and minutes from governing board meetings.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gary Richards

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025